

Capital Punishment

across Canada which was held in Winnipeg. There were students from every part of Canada at that seminar which was held on the topic of regional and economic development. The organizers of this large event invited over 100 students from all over Canada and asked the press, radio and television to film and report some of the activities that were taking place. The television people announced that they would not attend that particular seminar. However, when the organizers arrived the next morning they found the television crews had arrived. The reason they were there was that some vandals had broken windows in the school the night before. Here was a national event with students collected from all parts of Canada speaking on major topics at a seminar which could not get publicity, but when some vandals broke windows in the school the press found that this had to be reported. This exemplifies the fact that the negative aspects get attention in the press. I believe that this kind of reporting leads to some of the violence and to some forms of unacceptable behaviour. In my view, it is not only the politician who should bear the burden of trying to achieve peace and security in our society.

I should like to give another example. Recently on parliament hill the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) was drenched in milk during a demonstration. Later that night I heard on the radio that milk had been thrown on the minister when he spoke in English to French speaking farmers. The implication was obvious, that this was not simply a situation of upset dairy farmers but that the bilingual issue was involved. That kind of reporting is not only inaccurate, it is malicious. When we get that kind of reporting which focuses on the negative, when recognition is given to only certain sectors in our society, this stimulates the amount of violence in which certain elements engage. Surely, there must be a balance between the positive achievements that take place and the negative behaviour that occurs. We should not be continually exposed to such words as terrorist, hijacked, escaped, defrauded, incarcerated, raped, government graft, ransom, arrested, on strike, commando raid, demonstrators, execution, mercenaries, security, alleged plot, revolt, armed guard, Liberals, or defeat. All those words were gathered from one news broadcast. When you listen to such broadcasts and focus on the words, you ask yourself where all the good news is.

I should like to recommend two possible ways of trying to develop a system in which we can focus more on the positive achievements of man and give more credit to those who do positive things by giving them more attention in the news we hear and read. The newspaper guilds should establish within their ranks a regulatory body similar to that established by the College of Physicians and Surgeons. There have been a number of examples across the country of the College of Physicians and Surgeons severely disciplining doctors within its own ranks. I know there is a newspaper guild, but it does not ensure that newspapers give proper balance to the positive achievements in our society versus negative aspects, such as crime and violence. I believe there should be such a regulating body that would have some muscle. Obviously, this is not the role of the government or of some outside agency; it is high time that the press organized such a regulating body.

The other suggestion I should like to put forward is that radio and television should change their practice of coming

[Mr. Malone.]

before the CRTC in Toronto. Such hearings should take place on a periodic basis in the radio and television broadcast regions. I have heard people in my constituency recommend on numerous occasions that news about crimes be taken off the air, but when you talk to them you find that they watch such programs as Kojak, and this is reflected in the ratings. A more reasoned discussion, however, might show that the very people who watch are those who recognize the risks. If groups made representations at CRTC hearings in a more thoughtful manner instead of basing their judgment purely on the ratings, society would probably have a greater influence on the kind of television and radio programs it receives, and I think this is important.

● (1120)

I would simply conclude by saying, Mr. Speaker, that if we are to have peace and security in society, it is not the role only of the legislator—it is not the role only of the press either; it is the role of all Canadians. I think we could take a tremendous step forward if we could establish a number of organizations which would ensure that radio and television programs would reflect some of the positive achievements of Canadians. In this way, our young people would find a sense of reward in the programs rather than growing up believing that human nature is slanted to the negative and that there is more to gain outside the mores of society than from within. I believe all sectors of our society would then begin to pull together to give the young people a sense of achievement and to play down negativism.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Simma Holt (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have chosen to speak again on third reading debate to oppose Bill C-84 because statements have been made here that beg answers.

The statements of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau)—which were most impressive—also require some answers. Those statements better argued for retention than abolition, I may say. The Prime Minister has said this is a guessing game. It is indeed. Any time the state seeks solutions to human behaviour with its hundreds, perhaps thousands or maybe 22 million variations, it is a complex guessing game with no definitive answers possible. No absolutes are available, whether at the polarized ends or in the middle.

There will never be, and never has been, a perfect solution. There cannot be formulas to solve the social problems of a fast-changing, fast-moving society that is bombarded on all sides with depressing, disturbing, distorted information. Not only is society fast changing, but people change and as fast as a solution is found for one individual, never mind the whole of society, another change occurs.

Rather than debating with the Prime Minister I would have preferred to debate with the abolitionist statement of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark). Unlike our leader, he is consistent in that he says nothing—nothing worthy of debate. In fact, I suspect his politics consist of two sides and a fence.

This will be my last attempt to halt a dangerous experiment in the lives of innocent people and the fabric of our